

Historic, Archive Document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

1.942
A8Am12
Reserve

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Agricultural Marketing Administration

No. 32

"AMA" "WAR BOARD" LETTER

MEAT RATIONING: Program has been recommended to WPB by Food Requirements Committee at suggestion of Secty Wickard. WPB order expected in next couple of weeks, but will take about four months to get program in operation. Meanwhile look for voluntary conservation program to be recommended by USDA in next few days.

BACKGROUND: Livestock production this year has broken all previous records. The number of cattle on farms on January 1 totaled over 74,000,000 head - new high; sheep numbers totaled 56,000,000 head - also new high; hog numbers totaled over 60,000,000 head - 12% more than year earlier, and the 1942 spring and fall crop is expected to total over 105,000,000 head - the largest on record. This bumper livestock crop of 1942, when translated into terms of meat, is expected to total 21,700,000,000 lbs, compared with an average production of 16,300,000,000 lbs. during 5-year period 1932-1936 -- 17,800,000,000 lbs. during 5 years 1937-1941 and production in 1941 of 20,000,000,000 lbs. The total supply of meat expected to be available this year is estimated at 24,000,000,000 lbs. Despite the unusually favorable production and supply record for this year there is a meat shortage due to the keen wartime demand for meat coming from the armed forces, our allies and civilians. Our English and Russian allies require even more meat than our armed forces. (Meat going to Russia now is most important.) During the present fiscal year we will ship these two fighting allies about 3,200,000,000 lbs. of meat, mostly pork. Combined requirements of our armed forces and our allies during this fiscal year are expected to total more than 25% of our total meat production, or around 6,000,000,000 lbs, may go higher. Our civilian population could take about 21,000,000,000 lbs. this year. Thus, total demand, 27,000,000,000 lbs., adds up to more than total supply by 3,000,000,000 lbs. Shortage must come from civilian supply. WPB conservation order limiting the amount that packers can sell to the civilian trade, which should be issued shortly, will allow packers to supply civilians with as much meat per capita as they have eaten on an average during the past 10 years, approximately $2\frac{1}{2}$ lbs. per person per week -- considerably higher than the British ration of 1 lb., the German ration of 12 oz. With the increased supply of poultry, cheese, and dry beans we have, it provides a more than adequate protein diet. The second problem is to assure fair distribution of the available supply; that the supply is divided evenly throughout the year. The rationing program will meet this problem as soon as it can be instituted. But, since it will take about four months to set up the meat rationing program, there is need for a voluntary conservation program during the interim.

FIELD PURCHASE OPERATIONS: AMA is purchasing potatoes on Long Island. Since market has been fairly good, purchases have been light, only few cars bought at price of \$1.35 per cwt for cobbler and \$1.45 per cwt for Chippewas, Katchdins and Green Mountains. AMA office in Trenton standing ready to operate in New Jersey potato area if necessary.

Field purchase division is watching cabbage market in principal commercial states and will move with purchase program if necessary.

Field purchase men also have been authorized to buy "dessert" varieties of apples in commercial apple states if market falls off. Program of supporting prices of fresh vegetables on farmers markets in Connecticut, New Jersey and at Bustleton, Pa. continues.

MILK PRODUCTS: Recently offers of dairy products to AMA have been falling off. Several reasons are apparent, such as seasonal decline in production, building up of commercial stocks and selling to domestic markets rather than AMA because of price advantage at present time. While AMA policy calls for asking WPB for reservation orders only as a last resort -- officials warn that this may be forced later if industry doesn't offer enough to meet requirements.

: ::

Although offers declining, AMA still purchasing all U.S. No. 1 and No. 2-A American cheese, evaporated milk, and dry skim milk offered by the industry. Also buying canned process cheese for shipment to tropical and desert areas, and whole milk powder in 50-pound hermetically sealed, gas packed, cans.

Meanwhile, deep concern exists among dairy experts over prospects of meeting higher requirements of milk and dairy products next year. Domestic, military and L-L demands are expected to increase considerably over this year. Every effort must be made to encourage dairymen to keep production up. The job of holding production is definitely going to be a tougher job this year than it was last year. There is realization here that dairymen are having their troubles at present -- longer hours, harder work, less labor, difficulties with rationing, trouble getting supplies, transportation troubles, and other difficulties brought on by war demands. No relief is in sight, but rate of production MUST be kept on upgrade.

VICTORY FOOD SPECIAL PROGRAM: Cabbage will be featured in eastern seaboard states north of Florida and States north of Tennessee and east of Mississippi and Missouri Rivers, during period Sept. 28 thru Oct. 10. Harvest expected to be heavy in that area then. Main problem is marketing in fresh form supplies of cabbage that ordinarily would be used in the production of Kraut. This arises from WPB tin conservation order restricting use of tin cans for packing Kraut. Some commercial production of kraut will be put up in wood containers, but not as much as would have been packed had tin containers been available. WFS Drive will emphasize importance of home production of Kraut.

CHEESE BOXES: Last month AMA announced that A-1 cheese boxes (round two-way double head & bottom) could not be used for Lend-Lease cheese because they were difficult to handle in transit and took too much additional space. Order has been rescinded, however, since United Nations representatives are satisfied. Cheese is reaching destination in good shape - which is primary consideration. All AMA container problems are being centralized in J.B. Wyckoff's office. This letter will keep you advised of major changes in packaging L-L products.

SCHOOL MILK PROGRAM: Now working out program in cooperation with Extension Service for expansion of school milk program, which will be held, primarily to communities of under 10,000 population. Program is being limited to these smaller communities in order to secure widest possible coverage and to more equitably distribute available funds between regions and states and various sized urban and rural centers. First consideration will be given communities in which farmers need additional outlet for Class 1 milk provided by school milk program as an incentive for greater milk production; second, the community with greatest number of children in need of more milk. Extension Service workers, particularly county agents, best judges of whether farmers need program in a particular area. Extension Service also expected to furnish material assistance in encouraging sponsorship of programs and in providing check to see that programs are operating properly.

Note -- The mailing of this letter was unavoidably delayed until Tuesday of this week.

